

7627 Old Receiver Road  
Frederick MD 21701

November 13, 1988

Benjamin C. Bradlee, Executive Editor  
The Washington Post  
1150 15th Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20071

Dear Ben:

I suppose it really was expecting too much of you and the Post even to think that you could mark the 25th anniversary of the assassination of your friend and the President of us all with responsible journalism. If you haven't been able to in 25 years, why expect it now?

All you needed was a couple of ignorant hacks who lack concern for their own professional reputations and who are willing to toe the Bradlee/Post line on this subject.

Your shrink - and referring to him in any way suggesting that he is a scientist is not justified by this eruption of the murk of his mind - imagines what he writes about and ignores the available realities. Sure there was great sorrow and sure it lingers, but is that all? Not from the more than 15,000 letters I've gotten from strangers. The sadness over the loss of a beloved and respected President is only part of it and perhaps we are lucky that your shrink, in attributing so much to this sorrow, didn't include the AIDS epidemic. He didn't miss much else.

For Charles Paul Freund, one of your editors, it all ended when it had only just begun. The critical literature was exhausted in 1965 and 1966 and it was based entirely on only what the Warren Commission published. Nothing has been written since then and there was nothing else to write about since then.

Except, of course, the conspiracy theories. All criticism is expressed only in these theories, you would have the nation believe.

These pieces probably reflect the state of your and the Post's knowledge. You've kept yourselves as ignorant as you've sought to keep your trusting readers.

You may have trouble believing me but I do, really, sorrow for you and for how you will be regarded in history. This is not only because you are an editor who has ordained what is and is not - cannot be - news, in defiance of traditional American standards, but also because you were a friend who had no blondel in him.

There is much that is known, is established beyond reasonable question as fact. It is and will be available in the future when all of us will be judged over and over again. The future will not be limited to the studied and practised ignorance of the Post and its editors and, because this assassination was a turning point in our history, it will be studied.

While for the kind of junk he wrote your Outlook editor didn't need any knowledge at all, now that he is an editor, do you think he could bear to learn that whether or not there is a conspiracy is not a matter of theory and is a matter of fact? That whether or not there is a conspiracy is separate from who conspired? That conspiracy requires a combination to do wrong and at least one step in pursuance? This is to say that if a crime is beyond the capability of any one man, it is necessarily a conspiracy unless the participants had nothing at all to do with each other?

Maybe for the 50th anniversary, when you and others won't be around, the Post won't for a change disgrace itself and American journalism. This is not likely, however, from a review of what the Post published.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Harold", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Harold Weis erg